

TWK questions and answers

The Urth list — 7 messages, 6 voices, 04 Jan 2005

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4289>

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James Wynn — 04 Jan 2005, 06:05

I rather liked Idnn as a character and believe her agreeing to marry King Gilling is every bit as noble, selfless and dutiful as anything Able, Svon or Toug do in their various undertakings as knights aspirant.

And that was Wolfe's point right? That honor and courage are more than just carrying a weapon against overwhelming odds or protecting your reputation -- although that might be part of the duties of honor too. It is about giving up what you would really want (including potentially a long life) for the benefit of others. When Able refuses to carry a sword when he knows it will go against him in being taken seriously as a knight, that is honor. When he rebuffs sex with willing women for his love for Disiri, that is honor. And when Idnn (although terrified) takes on the mantle of the duties of being King Gilling's wife -- guarding his life and well-being when it would be better for her if he died -- that is honor and that is why Valfather comes to visit her.

I just found it hard to buy the notion that a brief marriage, not known to be consummated, would be taken as conferring authority on a foreigner. And maybe I missed why the female Angrborn live apart, and why the males prefer human women.

Male and female giants live apart just as male and female elephants live apart.

They accept her as her queen as a matter of honor. Furthermore, I don't think you can map human relations to the giants. The mothers don't love their sons. In fact, they are presumably contemptible to them. The male giants are attracted to human women because they ARE NOT giants.

Any thoughts on why the blood of the Angrborn is full of parasites? Aside from just making them seem extra vile?

It is taken from the myth of the death of Ymir. Men were formed from the maggots that formed on his corpse. So when Giants die their corpses are covered with creepy-crawlies.

~ Crush

stilskin — 04 Jan 2005, 06:22 · in reply to James Wynn

Regarding the giants and giantesses, I wouldn't be surprised if Wolfe was also thinking of the Ents and the Entwives. There are many reworkings of ideas from LOTR in TWK. Abel as a Gandalf/Aragorn figure is another.

P

--- James Wynn <thewynns at earthlink.net> wrote:
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Andy Robertson — 04 Jan 2005, 08:28 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn writes:

Male and female giants live apart just as male and female elephants live apart.

Odd, this. It is not from the Norse, unlike nearly every thing else in TWK.

There are plenty of stories of cohabitation between the gods and the giants, and the giantesses are usually seen as sexually attractive to the gods: but the idea that the giants and giantesses are separate species does not exist in that culture-stream. I don't know what its source is.

It is taken from the myth of the death of Ymir.

Ah, yes.

hartshorn

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 04 Jan 2005, 09:22 · in reply to Andy Robertson

On Tue, 04 Jan 2005 16:28:48 +0000, Andy Robertson

<andywrobertson at clara.co.uk> wrote:

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Odd, this. It is not from the Norse, unlike nearly every thing else in TWK.

There are a number of Celtic and Mediterranean bits running around, also, notably Kulilli, who's Babylonian.

www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer

Freedom has no barcode.

--J.G. Ballard

Nathan Spears — 04 Jan 2005, 10:12 · in reply to James Wynn

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found it hard to buy the notion that a brief marriage, not known to be consummated, would be taken as conferring authority on a foreigner. And maybe I missed why the female Angrborn live apart, and why the males prefer human women.

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I got the impression it was because the males felt emasculated by their women, who are larger and stronger than they are, and perhaps because the giantesses don't want them around. Notice that Utgard is in the southern part of the kingdom of the giants; for a species where

colder is better, the northern land would be the most desirable.

I also noted that Wolfe didn't go out of his way to paint the giantesses as inhuman and grotesque the way he did the giants, and that Able refers to one as if she were attractive; I wonder if they don't look vastly different from the giants as well.

harlekin at earthlink.net — 04 Jan 2005, 10:57 · follows Nathan Spears

I think he is linking them thematically to the undines of Urth. The giantesses' ancestors are the Giants of winter and old night, who GW makes clear are from deep space.
Don

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harlekin at earthlink.net — 04 Jan 2005, 11:01 · follows harlekin at earthlink.net

I think this also has a connection to Kulili. She is a composite creature made from worms, and according to Able's accounting of the creation of the worlds, the lower are made from the cast offs of the upper.
Don

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